

parental involvement and learners' academic performance at primary leaving examination in Rural Government-Aided Primary Schools in Ssisa Sub-county, Wakiso District, Uganda

Serunjogi Charles Dickens¹ and Namala Teopista^{2,*}

¹ School of Education Humanities and Social Sciences, Bugema University, Uganda.

² Bugema University Graduate School, Uganda.

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Abstract

The study sought to establish the level of parental involvement and learners' academic performance at P.L.E in rural government- aided primary schools in Sissa Sub-County, Wakiso District, Uganda. Three specific objectives guided the study thus;

- To establish the level of home-based parental involvement in rural government-aided primary schools in Ssisa Sub county, Wakiso district.
- To establish the level of school-based parental involvement in rural government-aided primary schools in Ssisa Subcounty, Wakiso district.
- To examine the relationship between parental involvement and learners' academic performance at PLE in rural government-aided primary schools, Wakiso district.

The study employed a descriptive research design using a mixed methods approach. The study also adopted a cross-sectional research method to gather the data from headteachers and teachers. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were applied in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. Results indicated that the level of home-based parental involvement in government aided primary schools in Sissa Subcounty was high at a mean of 3.64 with a standard deviation of 1.23. The results of school-based parental involvement in government aided schools in Sissa indicated that there was a high level of parental involvement with a mean of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 1.2. Results also revealed a positive and significant relationship between parental involvement and learners' academic performance at ($r = -.120$, $N = 102$, $p = .230 > 0.05$). The study recommended that; Parents should; provide a conducive learning environment to their children at home, provide quality supervision to children when given homework and show a positive attitude to their learners in home-based activities since it enhances performance of these children at P.L.E. The education department at the dsitric should fully sensitize the public about the relevances of parental involvement and how it enhances performance. School administrators should create close partnerships between parents and learners.

Keywords: Parental; Involvement; Academic; Performance; Examinations; Learners

1. Introduction

This study focused on Parental Involvement and Learners' Academic Performance in Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) in Rural Government-aided Primary schools in Ssisa Sub County, Wakiso district. This was premised on the fact that for children to perform well academically, they need the support of parents both at home and school.

* Corresponding author: Namala Teopista

Globally, academic performance of learners is related to parental involvement at various levels of schooling. In a study conducted by Sayid (2011) to examine the role of parental involvement and its effects on children's academic performance in Iran, it was discovered that parents supported the learning of their children in different forms; these included but not limited to providing conducive learning environment at home, providing children with learning materials, providing counseling and guidance, attending school events and interacting with teachers on issues related to academic welfare of children. And each of the forms of support provided by parents had a lasting impact on learners' academic achievement at their various levels of learning.

Titus (2018) in his research on parental involvement and academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education(KCPE) found that 40% of parents got involved in education of their children and that low involvement affected performance and only cooperation of parents significantly affected the overall performance by 14.1%.

Okello (2020) while investigating factors affecting academic performance of pupils in Universal Primary Education (U.P.E) schools in Uganda concluded that parental involvement was a key factor in the overall levels of attainment in schools. A similar study conducted by Martinez (2015) showed that learners whose parents were actively involved both at home and school performed well.

Uganda National Examination Board (2020) revealed that in 2019, 5.2% of the learners who sat for their Primary Leaving Examinations(PLE) passed in DIV I, 47% in Div. II, 71 % in DIV III, 84% in Div. IV and 12% were not graded nationally. All these indicated that academic performance at P.L.E in rural government-aided primary schools was still poor. In Wakiso district, majority of learners who performed poorly came from the rural government primary schools in the district (Wakiso Education Office, 2022). It was noted that in 2019, 2,121 of the learners passed in Div. 1 which translated to 21.5% (Wakiso District Local Government Report, 2020). This prompted the researchers to conduct an in-depth empirical study of the phenomenon to investigate the role of parental involvement in the academic performance of learners at PLE level in Ssisa Sub County, Wakiso district.

The study was guided by the Socio-Cultural Theory as postulated by Levi Vygotsky (1978). The theory emphasized the relationship between human beings and their environment both physically and socially. The influence of social and cultural factors on development and learning are abundant (Vygotsky1978). According to this theory, human beings are surrounded by family members and impacted by culture in which they live. Children's interaction with their family members in the community was so important for their learning because learning takes place in the community. For this reason, children gain knowledge about the world through this interaction. The above theory was relevant to the study because it showed the relationship between parental involvement and learner's academic performance. And so it guided the researcher to establish the relationship between parental involvement and learners' academic performance at P.L.E in rural government- aided primary schools in Sissa Sub County, Wakiso district, Uganda.

Objectives of the Study

- To establish the level of home-based parental involvement in rural government-aided primary schools in Sissa Sub County - Wakiso District, Uganda.
- To establish the level of school – based parental involvement in rural government-aided primary schools in Sissa Sub County, Wakiso district, Uganda.
- To establish the relationship between parental involvement and learners' academic performance at P.L.E in rural government-aided primary schools in Sissa Sub-County, Wakiso District, Uganda.

Research Hypothesis

The study took a null hypothesis thus;

There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance at P.L.E in rural government -aided primary schools.

2. Literature review

2.1. Home-based Parental Involvement and Learner's Academic Performance

Jaynes (2014) in his meta-analysis study, concentrated on types of parental involvement expressions and learner's academic performance at home. Results indicated that there was a relationship between parental involvement and youth outcomes in relation to academic, psychological and other outcomes. Sayid (2011) also pointed out that parental

involvement yields to academic performance of learners as parents' play an invaluable role in laying the foundation for their children's learning while at home. In a related study, Titus (2018) also pointed out that there were quite a number of kindergarten learners whose homework was left unattended to by the parents at home. This created a very challenging situation because learners who fell in this category could not compete with their peers whose parents actively involved in their children's home-learning activities.

Owusu et al (2018) in the study of the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of senior high school students in Ghana found that there was a positive relationship between parental involvement in education and students' academic performance. Owusu et al (2018) further argued that parents should play a leading role in supporting their children's education since parents were the first to expose their children to the social and academic world. In another study, Guolaug (2018) concluded that students performed well in class during online learning modalities due to high level of parental involvement because parents were so instrumental in providing guidance and supervising their children at home.

Celalettin (2019) notes that helping children with homework was the most typical form of parental involvement. In the study carried out by the researcher, it was revealed that good performance of pupils in mathematics was due to parental involvement in homework activities as Children reported their participations concerning parental involvement in sixth grade homework. However, Sayid (2011) argued that it was very important to point out the specific type of involvement noting that some parents have the skills to foster both cognitive and achievement motivation and yet if educational administrators were strongly committed to sensitizing all parents about the importance of home-based parental involvement, the academic outcomes for children could be very positive.

Gabosya (2015) found out that there was no significant relationship between professional guidance and counselling and academic performance in his study at Nkumba University in Uganda. In a similar study, Rayment (2019) noted that parents who play with their Children give an important attitude and behavioral influence towards child development which all led to good performance.

2.2. School-based Parental Involvement and Learner's Academic Performance

Hornby (2011) pointed out that parental involvement in school had been long held as an important and positive variable on children's academic and socio-emotional development. Parent-school partnership allows for the conceptualization of roles of parents and relationships and the impact on the development of children in a broader way. It is also a well-known fact that parental involvement at school is correlated with school achievement of both children and adolescents (Long, 2007).

Involvement of parents is related to their position at home (monitoring the learning of children), as well as participation in activities organized at school- parent-teacher conferences, volunteer activities, various forms of parental activism, workshops and seminars for parent (Hill & Taylor, 2007). The Kenyan curriculum emphasized the role of parents as essential to their children's education and in the success of curriculum implementation (Kimu, Agustinho Mwai(2012), The development therefore required how parents and community interacted with schools and education. Therefore, the effectiveness of educational reforms would depend on a comprehensive parental involvement in schools to enhance academic productivity among children.

2.2.1. Relationship between Parental Involvement and Learner's Academic Performance

Catalano and Catalano (2014) noted that there was a difference between academic scores of parent involvement profiles simply because high and medium involved parents had their children achieving highly than those with low involved parents. Academic performance of students was a key feature in education and it was considered to be the Center around which the whole education system resolves. However, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) urged that academic performance was the knowledge gained which was assessed by scores awarded by the teacher and or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. However, to disclose the gaps emphasis was on learners' achievement, focused on learners' performance for a given period of time. The current study concentrated on academic performance of learners at PLE in rural government aided primary schools in Sissa Sub County, Wakiso district as being influenced by parental involvement.

3. Materials and Method

This section on methodology describes the research design, materials and methods used in the study. It also includes the study population, sample size, sampling procedure, validity and reliability and data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design using a mixed method approach. The descriptive research design was used to gain more information about the characteristics of the respondents namely the headteachers, teachers, District Education Officer (DEO), District Inspector of schools (DIS) Wakiso district, School Management Committee (SMC) chairpersons, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) members because of their centrality in monitoring parental involvement and learner's academic performance. The study also adopted a cross-sectional research method to gather the data from head teachers and teachers. This method allowed for the collection of data from a big number at once thus, it was cost effective and quick in providing results (Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echienburg, Leone, 2018).

Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used as advocated by Amin (2005). Quantitative methods allowed the researchers to systematically measure variables and test hypotheses and it also allowed for the exploration of concepts and experiences in more detail. A descriptive survey research design was used because the study intended to select respondents from different schools with purpose of soliciting for their views about home and school-based parental involvement and learner's academic performance. The qualitative methods were applied mainly in gathering the required data from D.E.O, D.I.S, P.T.A members, Chairperson S.M.C. The qualitative tools applied in the collection of data included interview guides and document review while the questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data.

3.2. Locale of the Study

The study was carried out in Sissa Sub County, Busiro South, Wakiso District in selected rural Government-aided Primary Schools. The selected rural government -aided primary schools included; Sacred Heart Nalubudde Primary School, Tuzukuke Primary School, Munkabira Primary School, St. Bazzeketa Bulwanyi Primary School, St. Kizito Ssanda Primary School, Nkungulutale primary school, Kitende C.U primary school, Bweya muslem P/s, Bweya children's Home, Zziru p/s, Kabulamuliro P/s, Lutaba Chance p/s, Sissa p/s, Jjanyi p/s, St. Kizito Katwe p/s, Mpumudde p/s and Nankonge P/S.

3.3. Population of the Study

The study population comprised of 160 respondents who included Head teachers, teachers, School Management Committee (SMC) and Parents' Teachers Association (PTA) members in government aided primary schools in Sissa Sub County Wakiso District. The officials from the education department, Wakiso district also formed part of the target population. The target population was 117 respondents comprised of 17 headteachers, 5 chairpersons of School Management Committee (S.M.C), 5 members of Parents Teachers Association (P.T.A), 1 District Education Officer (D.E.O), 1 District Inspector of Schools (D.I.S) and 86 teachers from government-aided primary schools.

3.4. Sample Size

In this study, the sample size was determined using Krejcie & Morgan table (1970) and it was comprised of 116 respondents. These included 17 head teachers, 5 chairpersons School Management Committee (S.M.C) 6 members of Parents Teachers Association (P.T.A), 1 District Education Officer (D.E.O), 1 District Inspector of Schools (D.I.S), and 87 teachers from government aided primary schools. The schools included; Sacred Heart Nalubudde, Tuzukuke, Munkabira, St. Bazzeketta Bulwanyi, St. Kizito Ssanda, St. Mary's Nkungulutale, Kitende C.U, Bweya Muslem, Bweya Children's Home, Zziru, Kabulamuliro, Lutaba Chance, Sissa, Jjanyi, Katwe,

3.5. Data Collection Methods and Instruments

3.5.1. Closed-ended Questionnaire

To collect quantitative data the researcher used closed-ended questionnaires which were administered to teachers and head teachers. Closed-ended questionnaires were employed because they were cost effective in collecting data from bigger numbers of respondents (Conner Desai, 2019).

3.5.2. Interview Guide

An interview guide was administered to School Management Committee chairpersons, the District Education Officer, District Inspector of Schools, Parent Teachers Association members. An interview guide was used because it is one of the best ways of determining how much an individual knows about a certain phenomenon.

3.5.3. Document Review Guide

Document review was used to collect relevant data using available documents to check performance of learners in P.L.E in government aided primary schools Sissa Sub County, Wakiso district. The documents reviewed included; inspection reports from the District Education Officer's office, PLE results, statistical abstracts from the Wakiso District Local Government and minutes of meetings such as S.M.C and P.T.A minutes obtained from schools from 2017 – 2020.

3.6. Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative approaches were both used in data analysis. The coding of quantitative data from the questionnaires was done. The data was then entered into the computer for computation of descriptive statistics. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) was used to derive relevant descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation and percentages so as to present the data in form of tables based on the major research objectives. Qualitative data generated from interviews was categorized into themes in accordance with the research objectives and reported in narrative form.

4. Results and discussion

The findings comprised of data obtained from questionnaires which were administered to head teachers and teachers for quantitative data and interviews with School Management Committee (SMC) chairpersons, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) members, District Inspector of Schools (DIS), District Education Officer (DEO) of government- aided primary schools in Ssisa Sub-County, Wakiso district, Uganda. The findings were presented using mean, standard deviation and correlation followed by appropriate analysis and interpretation of parental involvement and learners' academic performance in Ssisa Sub County, Wakiso district.

4.1. Level of Parental Involvement in Rural Government-Aided Primary Schools in Sissa Sub County - Wakiso District, Uganda.

The first objective of the study was to establish the level of home-based parental involvement in rural government - aided primary schools in Sissa Sub County - Wakiso District, Uganda. The descriptive results are presented as reflected in the table below;

Table 1 Descriptive Results on the Level of Parental Involvement in Government Aided Primary Schools in Ssisa Sub County, Wakiso District, Uganda

Parental Involvement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Home Based parental involvement		
Parents' guide their children in the accomplishment of homework activities.	3.70	1.32
Parents provide their children with enough time to accomplish their homework activities.	3.37	1.33
Parents facilitate their children with home- based learning materials.	3.56	1.17
Parents sign on homework activities provided by their teachers as proof of their involvement.	3.41	1.23
Parents provide counselling and guidance to their children while at home.	3.62	1.14
Parents provide a conducive learning environment to their children while at home.	3.86	1.13
Parents provide their children with adequate scholastic materials to enhance performance at P.L.E.	3.93	1.24
Sub Mean & Standard Deviation	3.64	1.23
School Based parental involvement		
Parents participate in school-based meetings when called upon.	3.87	1.15
Parents participate in school events when called upon.	3.85	1.05
Parents pay visits to school, to check on their children's performance.	3.81	0.99

Parents provide the required scholastic materials needed for effective learning at school.	3.72	1.07
Parents collaborate with teachers to enhance the learning of their children.	3.44	1.36
Parents participate in guidance and counselling session organized by the school.	3.34	1.44
Parents participate in career guidance of their children.	3.80	1.15
Parents reward their children to motivate them to perform better at school.	3.57	1.28
Parents interact with teachers on issues relating to their children's learning.	3.50	1.29
Sub Mean & Standard Deviation	3.66	1.20
Grand Mean & Standard Deviation	3.65	1.21

KEY: 4.20-5.00 Very High 3.40-4.19 High, 2.60-3.39 Moderate, 1.80-2.59 Low, 1.00-1.79 Very Low Source: Primary Data (2022)

The results from table 3 above indicate that the level of home-based parental involvement in government-aided primary schools in Ssisa was high at a mean of 3.64 with a standard deviation of 1.23. Parents took an active role of supervising learners' homework, give learners enough time to accomplish their homework with basic learning materials at home. They signed in the learners' homework books as a sign of involvement and guidance, they also provided conducive learning environment at home at a mean of 3.86 with a standard deviation of 1.13; parents also provided scholastic materials at a mean of 3.93 with standard deviation of 1.23.

The second objective of the study was to establish the level of school-based parental involvement in rural government-aided primary school in Sissa Sub-county Wakiso district, Uganda. The results of school-based parental involvement in government aided schools in Sissa indicated that there was a high level of parental involvement with a mean of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 1.2. Findings revealed that parents participated in meetings whenever they would be called upon at a mean of 3.87 with a standard deviation of 1.15. They also checked on learners' academic performance, provided learners with scholastic materials, collaborated with teachers, participated in school-based guidance and counseling meetings, participated in career guidance of their children, rewarded their children at school and motivated them to perform better at mean of 3.57 with a standard deviation of 1.29. Parents also interacted with teachers on issues concerning their children's learning at a mean of 3.50 with a standard deviation of 1.29.

The findings imply that the level of both parental involvement at home and school was high with a mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 1.21. However, results from Wakiso district local government indicated that, irrespective of high level of parental involvement, the performance of learners at PLE in government-aided primary school in Sissa Sub County remained generally poor. For instance, only 6.64% of learners passed with Division 1 in Ssisa Sub County as reflected in the table below (Wakiso District Local Government Report 2017, 2018, 2019 & 2020).

Table 2 PLE Results for Ssisa Subcounty, Wakiso District

YEAR	DIV I	DIV II	DIV III	DIV IV	DIV U	DIV F
2017	98	754	264	198	120	118
2018	188	1531	494	355	164	113
2019	141	1,118	388	243	196	90
2020	469	1327	424	342	150	100

Source: UNEB, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

The results above indicate that in the rural parts of Wakiso District and specifically Ssisa Sub County majority of learners have difficulties of excelling in PLE examinations. One of the reasons given in regard to the above results is poor quality of parental involvement both at home and School.

In an interview, one of the respondents noted;

In the urban parts of Wakiso, majority of parents respond positively to school concerns. However, in the ruraparts, many parents have a poor attitude towards the education of their children. Even when they attend meetings, they don't implement what is agreed on. At the end of the day, the children don't perform well academically (R1, 2022)

Another respondent stated;

Although the parents sometimes get involved in school activities and the learning of their children in particular, the quality of involvement is not the best. Parents who are not well educated don't give the correct guidance to their children. As a result, children don't perform well(R, 2022)

Another respondent argued;

We need to think about the quality of decisions taken by the parents. Are these decisions good enough to help children perform well? Sometimes when you attend parents meetings, you think about the fate of our children because some of those decisions are not helpful to the children(R3, 2022)

In a related interview, another respondent reported;

A lot needs to be done to build the capacity of our parents. Some parents sign on children's homework but they don't take time to read through to internalize its content. They don't have time and many of them don't understand the task. So in such a scenario, can children really perform well?(R4, 2022)

On the basis of the above interviews, the views of respondents seem to show that there are quite a number of issues related to parental involvement both at home and school. Those in the rural areas don't perceive education in the same way like their urban counterparts. While parents in the urban areas of Wakiso seem to be positive about the learning of their children, it is completely the opposite of what takes place in the rural places of Wakiso such as Ssisa. The quality of parental participation raises a lot of questions. This perhaps explains why learners' academic performance in Ssisa subcounty is still low.

4.2. Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Learner's Academic Performance at PLE In Rural Government Aided Primary Schools

The third objective of this study was to examine the relationship between parental involvement and learner's academic performance at PLE in rural government- aided primary schools in Ssisa Sub - County, Wakiso district

To find out whether there was a relationship between parental involvement and learner's academic performance at P.L.E in rural government-aided primary schools, the two variables were related using Pearson's correlation co-efficient index as indicated in Table 5.

Table 3 Pearson's Correlation Results between Parental Involvement and Learner's Academic Performance

Correlations		
		Academic Performance
Home-based	Pearson Correlation	-0.120
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.230
	N	102
School based	Pearson Correlation	0.324**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
	N	102
	Pearson Correlation	0.116
Parental Involvement	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.247
	N	102

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.2.1. Home-Based Parental Involvement

Table 3 results show a negative relationship between home-based parental involvement and learners' academic performance ($r = -.120$, $N = 102$, $p = .230 > 0.05$). This result implies that improvements in home-based parental involvement do not necessarily translate into improvement in learners' academic performance and vice versa.

4.2.2. School-Based Parental Involvement

Table 3 results show a positive and significant relationship between school-based parental involvement and learners' academic performance ($r = .324$, $N = 102$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). This result implies that improvements in school-based parental involvement are followed by improvements in learners' academic performance and declines in school-based parental involvement are followed by declines in learners' academic performance.

4.3. Hypothesis Testing

The study hypothesis stated that "There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance at P.L.E in rural government -aided primary schools". However, it was found out that school-based parental involvement was significantly related with learners' academic performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. There is thus adequate evidence that significant relationship exists between parental involvement and children's academic performance at P.L.E in rural government -aided primary schools but with specific regard to school-based parental involvement.

5. Conclusion

There was a high positive significant relationship between parental involvement and learners' academic performance. If the parents facilitate the learners in terms of instructional materials, give quality guidance and counseling, this may in turn translate into higher academic performance of these learners at P.L.E in rural government - aided primary schools in Ssisa Sub- County, Wakiso district. Therefore, both school and home-based parental involvement are so important for learners' academic performance and this should translate into an output of first grades attained each year in Sissa when P.L.E results get released.

Recommendations

Parents should provide a conducive learning environment to their children at home; they should supervise the children's homework activities to enhance performance of these children at P.L.E. In addition, parents should take a positive role of providing their children with scholastic materials like pens, books among others to enhance learning.

The government should fully sensitize the public about the relevance of parental involvement and how it stimulates academic performance. This will help to motivate learners to be more creative, more engaged and more interested in learning as they would be aware that parents have to check on their academic progress both at home and school.

Other researches should be carried out on parental attitude and learners' academic performance since this report showed that whenever parents' engagement was high then performance of learners was good. Also, home background and learners' academic performance should be another area of concern to check whether poor or good background affects performance of learners at P.L.E

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the contribution of all the respondents who participated in the study specifically the teachers, the headteachers, the SMC and PTA members of the public primary schools in Ssisa Subcounty. Particular mention is also extended to the District Education Officer and District Inspector of Schools, Wakiso for the support given to us without which this study wouldn't have succeeded. Thank you so much.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

We have no conflict of interest in relation to this study

Statement of informed consent

To all our respondents, this study on Parental Involvement and Learners' Academic Performance in Rural Government-aided Primary Schools in Ssisa subcounty, Wakiso District is for academic purposes. No information if any about your personal attributes will be divulged without your permission. We promise that we shall keep high level of confidentiality in regard to this study. Thank you.

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